MINUTES

OF THE

SOUTHERN AND SOUTH-WESTERN

PRESBYTERIAN CONVENTION,

HELD AT CASSVILLE, GA.

OCTOBER, 1840.

WITH AN

APPENDIX.

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MINUTES.

PURSUANT to a CALL signed by 55 Ministers and 23 Elders, from 12 Presbyteries, the following Presbyterian Ministers, Elders, and Members, representatives of Presbyteries and Churches in the Southern and South Western States, met in Convention at Cassville, Georgia, on the 29th of October, 1840, viz:—

MINISTERS—Wm. Hill, D. D., of Winchester Presbytery, Va., James H. C. Leach, of Hanover Presbytery, Va.; Benjamin M. Palmer, D. D., E. White, I. S. K. Legare, Wm. C. Dana, Thos. Magruder, Thos. H. Legare, of Charleston Union Presbytery, S. C.; C. W. Howard, James H. George, Theodore M. Dwight, Hampden C. Carter,* of Etowah Presbytery, Ga.; Robert Hardin, D. D., of the Presbytery of West Tennessee; Thos. J. Hall, of the Presbytery of West Tennessee; Robert McLain, of Clinton Presbytery, Mississippi; and Wm. Quillin,* of Hopewell Presbytery, Ga.

LAYMEN—Wm. Thompson, M. Montgomery, M. D., Wm. A. McCurdy, Jas. Huie, J. McConnel, C. W. Bryan, R. H. Patton, M. D., J. Bates, R. Henderson, A. Milner,* J. C. Fitten,* and H. Milner.

The Rev. ROBERT HARDIN, D. D., was elected President of the Convention, and the Rev. T. MAGRUDER was appointed Secretary. The Convention was constituted with prayer.

A Committee, consisting of Rev. Messrs. Wm. Hill, D. D., J. H. C. Leach, E. White, C. W. Howard, T. J. Hall, Robert Hardin, D. D., Robert McLain, and Mr. Montgomery, (Elder), were appointed to prepare business for the Convention. The Convention then adjourned to meet to-morrow morning at 9 o'clock. Concluded with prayer.

Friday morning, Oct. 30th, 9 o'clock.

The Convention met according to adjournment, and was opened with prayer. The Committee appointed to prepare business for the Convention, reported the following items for consideration, viz.,

1. The communications addressed to the Convention.

* Not present when the Convention was organized.

2. A statement of the violations of the Constitution, during the progress of the (so called) Reform.

3. Our present and prospective relations.

4. The propriety of establishing a Literary and Theological Institution.

5. The importance of a religious Newspaper, and the best means of sustaining and circulating the same.

6. The numerical strength of Constitutional Presbyterianism in the Southern and South Western States.

7. The most effectual means of supplying our destitutions.

Which report was accepted and approved.

The Rev. C. W. Howard was appointed Assistant Secretary.

The Convention then took up the first item in the above report.

Communications expressing the deepest interest in the object of the Convention, from the Synod of East Tennessee, Union Presbytery, the Rev. Wm. Eagleton, and the Rev. Dr. Anderson, of Tennessee, were read and placed on file.

A Committee, consisting of Dr. Palmer, Mr. Hall, and Mr. McCurdy (Elder), was appointed to report on the (so called) reform measures, in their relation to the constitution of the Church.

Dr. Hill, Messrs. Leach, White, Howard, McLain and Huie, (Layman), were appointed a Committee to consider and report on the present and prospective relations of the ecclesiastical bodies which are represented in this Convention.

On motion,

Resolved, That the Convention will now enter into a free conversation on the subject referred to this Committee, that they may learn the views of the members present.

The Convention then had a recess until 2½ o'clock.

Half-past 2 o'clock.

The Convention met and took up the unfinished business, which was continued till the Convention gave way to a motion for a recess until 7½ o'clock this evening, which prevailed.

Half-past 7 o'clock.

The Convention met. Messrs. A. Milner and J. C. Fitten appeared, and took their seats as members of the Convention. The unfinished business of the morning was resumed and brought to a close.

The subject of establishing a Literary and Theological Institution,

was taken up and committed to Messrs. Robt. Hardin, D. D., Leach, George, and McConnel, (Elder).

The Convention proceeded to consider the importance of a religious Newspaper, and the best means of sustaining and circulating the same; which subject was referred to a Committee, consisting of Messrs. Dana, Dwight, McLain, and Bryan, (Elder).

The subject of the Statistics of Constitutional Presbyterianism in the Southern and South Western States, was taken up and committed to Messrs. Hall, Magruder, I. S. K. Legare, McLain, and R. H. Patton, (Layman).

A Committee, consisting of Messrs. Dwight, T. H. Legare, and Fitten, (Elder), was appointed to consider the most practicable and effectual means of supplying with the ministrations of the Gospel, the destitute churches and communities in the States represented in this Convention.

The Convention adjourned, to meet to-morrow morning at 10 o'clock. Concluded with prayer.

Saturday morning, Oct. 31st, 10 o'clock.

The Convention met according to adjournment, and was opened with prayer. The minutes of yesterday were read.

A series of resolutions on the subject of Slavery was introduced by Mr. Howard, which were referred to a Special Committee, consisting of Rev. Messrs. Howard, White, Dana, and Montgomery, (Elder).

The Convention then had a free conversation, to furnish materials for a Statistical Report of the numerical strength of Constitutional Presbyterianism at the South and South West, after which the Convention had a recess till 2½ o'clock.

Half-past 2 o'clock.

The Convention met, and the Committee appointed to report on the Reform measures, presented their report in part, which was accepted, and after some discussion, was re-committed to the same Committee, with the addition of the Rev. Messrs. Dana and Howard.

On motion,

Resolved, That this Convention have seen with regret, that certain leading persons of the New Basis party of the Presbyterian Church, have taken the ground that it is contrary to the spirit of true Presbyterianism to sit at the communion table with our brethren of the Methodist Church.

Resolved, That we consider this position as a natural, legitimate,

and consistent result of the principles which have occasioned the recent revolution in the Presbyterian Church, tending as they do to Antinomianism in belief, and to rigid sectarianism in practice.

Resolved, That we feel it incumbent upon us—inasmuch as this position has been taken by persons bearing the name of Presbyterian, in common with ourselves,—distinctly to state, that we have no sympathy with such narrowness of feeling, and still continue to hold the same fraternal relation with other evangelical denominations, which has ever been held by the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America.

Resolved, That we recommend to the Presbyteries represented in this body, to cherish within their bounds, a truly catholic spirit, as being at once the distinguishing feature and ornament of the Christian character.

The Committee, to whom was referred the resolutions on the subject of Slavery, reported as follows, viz.—

Whereas The institution of domestic slavery is a part of the civil institutions of the land in which we live, and is, therefore, a fit subject for legislation only in the political bodies of the States in which it exists, therefore,

1. *Resolved*, That this Convention deeply regret the action of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, on the subject of domestic Slavery.

2. *Resolved*, That while the body commonly called the Old School Assembly, rests satisfied with the action of the Assembly in 1818, on the subject of slavery, as a *standing order*, we are highly gratified, that since the rupture in the Presbyterian Church, the body claiming to be the Constitutional General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, has taken such action on the subject of slavery, as evinces an increasing interest in the welfare of the Southern Churches, and gives an encouraging omen of its final and satisfactory adjustment.

3. *Resolved*, That this Convention earnestly hope, that the Constitutional Assembly will, at their next session, take such order upon this subject as will remove a serious obstacle to an entire union of Constitutional Presbyterians throughout this land.

On motion,

Resolved, That the members of this Convention be requested to furnish the Secretary with the residence and post-office address of the

members of the Constitutional Presbyteries in the Southern and South-Western States.

On motion,

Resolved, That the Convention engage in religious exercises, from half-past 6 to 8 o'clock this evening.

Rev. Messrs. Howard and George were appointed a Committee to make arrangements for these services, who reported the following order of exercises, viz.—Singing and prayer, by Mr. Hall—an address, by Mr. Leach—reading the Scriptures, by Mr. M'Lain—Prayer, by Dr. Palmer—singing and an address, by Dr. Hardin—and prayer and benediction, by Mr. White.

The Convention then had a recess until 6½ o'clock this evening.

Half-past 6 *o'clock.*

The Convention met, and engaged in religious exercises, which were conducted according to the above order.

At the close of these solemn and interesting exercises, the Convention adjourned to Monday morning, 10 o'clock. Closed with prayer.

Monday morning, Nov. 2, 10 *o'clock.*

The Convention met according to adjournment, and was opened with prayer.

The minutes of Saturday were read.

The Rev. H. C. Carter, and Mr. H. Milner (Layman,) appeared and took their seats as members of the Convention.

The Rev. T. M. Dwight, from the Committee appointed to suggest the most effectual means of supplying with the ministrations of the Gospel, the destitute population within the bounds of the Presbyteries represented in the Convention, offered their report, which was accepted, and after some discussion was re-committed to the same Committee.

The Committee on the statistics of Constitutional Presbyterianism in the Southern and South-Western States, reported, whose report was accepted, and having been amended, was adopted, and is as follows, viz.—

The Committee appointed to ascertain the number of Constitutional Ministers, Elders, Churches, &c. in the South and South-West, Report, That there are several causes, which combined, render it difficult to ascertain the number with entire accuracy. From considerable portions of territory there is no representation in this Convention.—From other regions of considerable extent, the representation is so small, that numbers could not be given with that precision which is desirable.

From the information which your Committee were able to obtain, they feel clear in reporting the following numbers:

	Mins'trs.	Licent's.	Candi'ts.	Chur'hs.
District of Columbia & State of Virginia,	29	2	3	30
South Carolina,* - - - - -	13	2		2
Georgia, - - - - - - -	5		1	6
Middle Tennessee & North Alabama,	21	2		20
Mississippi, - - - - - -	10		2	13
Synod of East Tennessee, - - -	27		6	30
	†105	6	12	101

404 Elders.

509 Ministers & Elders.

In the regions above designated, including Kentucky, there are several Ministers not enrolled with Constitutional Presbyteries, and therefore, not included in the above estimate, who have, nevertheless united in the call for this Convention.

There are also many Ministers, who, in judgment and feeling, are on the Constitutional side, but for reasons, no doubt, satisfactory to their own minds, have hitherto acted in connection with the New Basis party.

There is, however, evidence to induce the conviction that the progress of the (so called) Reform, will place many of them fully in the ranks of the Constitutional body of Presbyterians. There are also many Churches, a large portion of whose members are decidedly Constitutional in their views, which, from the circumstances in which they are placed, are at present counted with the (so called) Reform.

Your Committee could not ascertain with the same precision the number of Elders in the Constitutional Churches reported, but allowing four to each Church, which they suppose to be a low estimate, the number of Ruling Elders would be 400. Your Committee are of opinion, that if Ministers, Elders, and Churches, would all take their stand according to their better judgment, the Constitutional number would be increased one *fourth* if not one *third*.

* Several Churches under the pastoral care of members of the Charleston Union Presbytery, though thoroughly Presbyterian in their organization, have *never* been connected with said Presbytery.

† See note at end of the pamphlet.

The Convention then had a recess till half-past 2 o'clock.

Half-past 2 o'clock.

The Convention met. The Committee to whom was re-committed the report on our destitutions, reported as follows, viz.—The Committee appointed to suggest measures for supplying our destitutions, beg leave to Report, that in considering the subject referred to them, as thoroughly as their knowledge of the state of things would permit, two items appear to demand the special attention of this body, viz.—*men* and *means*.

In respect to the former, there is beyond all question, a most lamentable deficiency; but, as those who are already in the field of ministerial labor, (inadequate as their number is to meet our necessities) are even more than can be supported if they should devote their undivided energies to the work of the ministry; your Committee feel that the second item noticed above, is by far the most important which they can possibly bring to your notice. Hence they believe that the most effectual step which can be taken to furnish the churches with the preached Gospel, would be to aid them in providing the necessary means for its support. They recommend, therefore, the adoption of the following resolutions:

Whereas it is well known that a large number of organized churches are almost, if not entirely, destitute of the privileges of the Gospel; churches, which would at this moment be differently situated, had they the means of adequately supporting pastors, or could they have derived at least some assistance from those who were fully competent to afford it; Therefore,

Resolved, 1st. That this Convention recommend to the Presbyteries represented in this body, some efficient and immediate action upon this subject; and, also, that a large proportion of the funds of the Church contributed for Missionary purposes, be, for the present, devoted to our domestic wants.

Resolved, 2dly. That we recommend the adoption of such measures as will secure the aid of suitable men for immediate action; and will serve to bring forward young men to the Gospel Ministry. But as some time will be requisite for the complete accomplishment of these desirable results, Therefore,

Resolved, 3dly. That we recommend to Pastors and Stated Supplies,

to visit the destitute churches in their respective neighbourhoods, and render them such occasional assistance as may be in their power.

A Committee was appointed to consider the expediency of organizing a Southern and South-Western Board of Domestic Missions.—The Rev. Messrs. Hardin, D. D., Howard, Leach and Hall, were appointed that Committee.

The Committee on the present and prospective relations of the ecclesiastical bodies with which the members of this Convention are connected, presented the following as their report, which was unanimously adopted, viz:—

[This Report will be found on a succeeding page.]

On motion,

Resolved, That when this Convention adjourn, it will adjourn to meet on the 2d Thursday of November, 1841, in Cassville, Georgia.

The Committee to consider the expediency of establishing a Literary and Theological Institution for the South and South-West, presented their report, which was accepted and adopted, and is as follows, viz:—

The Committee, to whom was referred the subject of the expediency of establishing a Literary and Theological Institution, beg leave to report,—

That there is a pressing necessity for the existence of such institutions, from which the light of knowledge, truth and piety, may radiate to the immense and growing population in the great Southern and South-Western portions of the country.—Seminaries of such description furnish the only adequate and effectual means for mental cultivation, and for ensuring the progress and prevalence of genuine religion. The exigency, in the present case, is augmented by the fact, that a usurped dominion is maintained over many similar institutions in different parts of the country, where the mind is bound by sectarian chains, liberal inquiries are checked, and the freedom of speech and of conscience is suppressed. This posture of affairs throws Constitutional Presbyterians on their own efforts and resources, and should awake all their energies to noble efforts. The necessity for action is obvious and urgent.

The prospect of success is not without encouragement. A concentration of means, and properly directed efforts, under the guidance and

blessing of the Great Head of the Church, will result in the accomplishment of the desired object. All should feel that the work *must be done*, and by the blessing of heaven on the efforts of the liberal and pious on earth, *it will be effected.* The Committee, therefore, recommend the adoption of the following resolutions:—

1. *Resolved*, That it is expedient, and indispensable to the best interests of this community, that a Literary and Theological Institution, of a high order, be established at some point central to the South and South-West.

2. *Resolved*, That as soon as practicable, this subject be laid before the ecclesiastical judicatories of Constitutional Presbyterians within our bounds, and that said judicatories are hereby respectfully requested by this Convention, to take into serious consideration the expediency of establishing, and the character and location of these contemplated institutions, and the most effectual methods of their speedy establishment; and to report their views fully on the whole subject, to be laid before the next meeting of the Convention.

On motion,

Resolved, That Dr. Hardin, Messrs. Leach, White, Howard and M'Lain, be a Committee of Correspondence on the subject of said Institutions, whose duty it shall be to correspond at discretion, with the view of receiving communications to be submitted to the Convention at the next meeting.

The Committee appointed to consider the importance of permanently establishing a religious newspaper, under the auspices of the Convention, reported, but before final action on their report the Convention had a recess till half past six o'clock this evening.

Half past 6 *o'clock.*

The Convention met, and resumed and continued the unfinished business, until the hour of adjournment. Adjourned to meet to-morrow morning at 9 o'clock. Concluded with prayer.

Tuesday Morning, 9 *o'clock.*

The Convention met, and was opened with prayer.

On motion, the reading of the minutes was omitted.

The subject of the Newspaper was resumed, and the report of the Committee adopted, which is as follows:—

Whereas it is manifest that a Southern and South-Western religious

Newspaper,—devoted, in part, to the maintenance and defence of the great principles which the friends of the Constitution of our Church at the South, hold in common—is indispensably necessary to the successful dissemination of those principles, and to the advancement of the cause: Therefore,

Resolved, 1. That we pledge ourselves to the support of the SOUTHERN CHRISTIAN SENTINEL; with the understanding, that it be so modified and enlarged in its plan, as to meet the wants of all Presbyterians at the South and South-West, who adhere to the old Constitutional basis.

2. That it be earnestly recommended to all the friends of the cause, that they make an immediate effort to secure to this paper an efficient patronage, and to render its circulation as extensive as possible.

The Committee appointed to consider the expediency of organizing a Domestic Missionary Society, to be styled the Southern and South-Western Board of Domestic Missions, presented their report, which was accepted, and, after discussion and amendment, adopted, and is as follows:—

Resolved, That it is expedient that this Convention proceed at once to organize a Southern and South-Western Board of Domestic Missions, and that a Committee be appointed to draft a Constitution for the same.

Whereupon, the same Committee, with the substitution of Rev. E. White in the place of Dr. Hardin, were appointed for the purpose specified in the above resolution.

The Committee to report on the Reform measures, offered their report, which was received and adopted.

[For this Report see page 13.]

On motion,

Resolved, That the proceedings of this Convention, be published in the Southern Christian Sentinel, and also in pamphlet form; and that one thousand extra copies of the former, and five hundred copies of the latter, be furnished for gratuitous distribution.

The Rev. Messrs. Dana, White and Magruder, were appointed the Committee of Publication.

The Committee appointed to draft a Constitution, for the Southern and South-Western Board of Domestic Missions, presented their report, which was adopted, and is as follows:—

The Committee appointed to draft a Constitution for the Southern and South-Western Board of Domestic Missions, report the following, viz:

CONSTITUTION.

Article 1. This Board shall be known by the name of "*The Southern and South-Western Board of Domestic Missions.*"

Art. 2. The officers of the Board shall be, a President, 2 Vice Presidents, a Treasurer and Secretary, with a Board of Directors consisting of thirty-two members; to be chosen at the Annual Meeting of the Southern and South-Western Convention.

Art. 3. It shall be the duty of the Board of Directors, to appoint an Executive Committee of five, who shall have the general management of the concerns of the Board. They shall also have power to appoint an agent, or agents, as they may deem necessary; and shall be required to make an Annual Report to the Convention.

Art. 4. This Constitution may be altered or amended, by a vote of two thirds of the members present, at any annual meeting of the Convention.

The Rev. Messrs. Howard, Leach, and M'Lain, were appointed a Committee to nominate officers for the Board of Missions. The Convention then had a recess till half-past 2 o'clock.

Half past 2 o'clock.

The Convention met, and the Committee of nomination reported, nominating the following list of

OFFICERS.

Rev. Wm. Hill, D. D., of Virginia, *President.*
Rev. B. M. Palmer, D. D., of S. C., 1*st Vice President.*
Rev. Thos. Cleland, D. D., of Ky., 2*d do. do.*
Maj. J. Brown, of Tennessee, *Treasurer.*
Rev. E. White, of S. C., *Secretary.*

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD.

TENNESSEE.

Rev. Robert Hardin, D. D.
" T. J. Hall,
" J. Sherman,
" E. McMillan,
Rev. Isaac Anderson, D. D.
" William Eagleton,
Major J. Brown,
G. Frierson, Esq.

ALABAMA.

Rev. John Allan, D. D.	Hon. A. F. Hopkins.
" W. Potter,	

MISSISSIPPI.

Rev. A. Newton,	Rev. R. McLain.

GEORGIA.

Rev. C. P. Beman,	F. M. Robertson, M. D.
" T. M. Dwight,	Thomas Clay, Esq.
" C. W. Howard,	

SOUTH CAROLINA.

Rev. E. White,	Hon. S. Glover,
" W. S. Lee,	R. L. Stewart, Esq.
" R. Post, D. D.,	

NORTH CAROLINA.

Rev. L. R. Morrison.

VIRGINIA.

Rev. Wm. Hill, D. D.,	Rev. A. J. Leavenworth,
" J. H. C. Leach,	James Caskie, Esq.,
" A. D. Pollock,	P. R. Grattan, Esq.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA.

Rev. J. C. Smith.

KENTUCKY.

Rev. J. C. Stiles,	Rev. A. C. Dickerson.

The above nomination was confirmed by the Convention.

The Convention then had a recess, to allow time for the organization of the Board of Domestic Missions.

After the adjournment of the Board of Missions, the Convention met at the call of the President. The Convention was then informed by the President of the Board, of the election of the following gentlemen as the Executive Committee of the Board, viz., Rev. Messrs. Thomas J. Hall, Joseph Sherman, Edward McMillan, Major J. Brown, and G. Frierson, Esq.; and also, that the Rev. Robert Hardin, D. D., had been appointed General Agent of the Board.

On motion,

Resolved, That this Convention have heard with great pleasure, that the Southern and South-Western Board of Domestic Missions have appointed the Rev. Robert Hardin, D. D., as their General Agent, and cordially recommend him to the churches in the South and South West.

On motion,

Resolved, That in view of the great importance of the principles which distinguish us from our New Basis brethren, the Convention recommend to all who sympathize with us, diligently to use all Christian and honorable means of extending information and enlightening the public mind on the subject of our differences and the occasion of our present position.

On motion,

Resolved, That it be earnestly recommended to all the Ministers and Elders in our communion, to present the claims of the Southern Christian Sentinel to their respective charges, and obtain as extensive patronage as possible in support of said paper.

On motion,

Resolved, That the thanks of this Convention be tendered to the citizens of Cassville and its vicinity, for the kind and hospitable manner in which they have received and entertained the members of this body during its sessions.

The reading of the Minutes was then commenced, but before it was completed, the Convention had a recess till 6½ o'clock this evening.

Half past 6 *o'clock.*

The Convention met. The Rev. Wm. Quillin appeared and took his seat as a member of the Convention.

The reading of the Minutes was resumed and completed.

The Minutes having been read were approved. The Convention then adjourned. Concluded with prayer and the Apostolic Benediction.

ROBERT HARDIN, President.

T. Magruder, *Secretary.*

REPORT,

IN RELATION TO THE "REFORM" MEASURES.

The origin of the (so called) "*Reform*" party in the Presbyterian Church, cannot be more impartially set forth than in the words of the Rev. Dr. Alexander. In an article—understood to be from his pen—which appeared in the Princeton Repertory for January, 1832, the following notice is taken of a purpose, even then entertained on the part of some, to *divide the Church.*

"There are among us some polemical spirits, who are of opinion that the best way is to *fight it out.* In regard to *fundamental errors*, we are of the same opinion; but in relation to *differences among brethren*, we think the case is very different. If division, on account of some diversity in sentiment, commences, there is no telling where it will end. Endless controversies respecting the Church property would necessarily arise, and society would be agitated and convulsed to its very foundations.

"Upon mature deliberation, therefore, we declare our sentiments to be opposed to all schemes which tend to the division of the Presbyterian Church. We do not know, indeed, that there are any persons, who seriously wish or meditate any such thing. But sometimes hints and rumors come to our ears, which seem to have this bearing. We deem it, therefore, a duty, to take this opportunity of disclaiming every thought of this kind for ourselves, and of avowing our intention to *oppose firmly* all measures, wherever they may originate, which have a tendency to produce *division* in the Presbyterian Body."

The reasons assigned by Dr. Alexander, for strenuously resisting this project of division, were, that the diversities of sentiments existing in the Church pertained to *non-essentials*—were but "SHADES *of difference*"—affording no colorable pretext for schism. On these points, he holds the following decisive language:

"As brethren, differing as we do now, have hitherto continued to live in peace, and in most places, in great harmony; and have loved each other as brethren, and have cordially co-operated in promoting the Redeemer's kingdom,—why may not this still be the case, after the present exacerbation of feeling has subsided?"

It appears, nevertheless, that there were, even *then*, certain "polemical spirits," who, rather secretly than openly, were agitating the question of *division*. Such is the *origin* of the (so called) Reform party; and from this period (1832,) we may date the commencement of that series of measures which have at length resulted in the violent disruption of the Church.

As *division* was the object had in view, every effort was of course made to magnify the differences of sentiment existing among brethren—to excite to its highest intensity that *odium theologicum*, which has too often disgraced the Christian Church,—to exasperate the party feeling which repeated collisions in the Assembly had served to engender—and, by means of party conventions and party newspapers, to scatter far and wide through the Church the seeds of discord and strife.

In 1834, the "Act and Testimony" was put forth. This paper, prepared by one of the most prominent leaders of the party, avowed a "fixed purpose to endeavor to exclude from the Church" those to whom they were opposed; condemned the course pursued for a series of years by the General Assembly; called upon all who approved the Act and Testimony, to "give their public adherence thereto"; and recommended that a *Convention* be held immediately before the sessions of the Assembly in 1835.

The next important measure was a *secret* "Circular," addressed, in 1836, by a committee of the party, to such ministers and others throughout the church, as were supposed to favor their cause. This measure served the purpose of ascertaining their strength, which end being attained, the same committee put forth, some time after, a public "Address to the Ministers, Elders, and Members of the Presbyterian Church,"* which, near the close, thus distinctly avows the object at which the party was aiming: "Fathers, brethren, fellow Christians, whatever else may be dark, this is clear, *we cannot continue in the same body.* In some way or other, these men must be separated from us."

Without exhibiting more in detail the preliminary measures of the Reform, it may be sufficient to state, that, by means of party organi-

* It is remarkable that of seven ministers whose signatures were attached to these "avowedly revolutionary" documents, three, viz., "J. Breckenridge, W. A. McDowell, and F. McFarland," are, or were, salaried Agents of the Ecclesiastical Boards.

zation, strengthened and consolidated during the sessions of each succeeding Assembly—by the powerful influence of the ecclesiastical Boards, whose managers held under their control the charitable revenues of a considerable portion of the church—by the efforts of travelling Agents, acting under the authority of these Boards—and finally, by means of Conventions, sitting with closed doors previous to, and at intervals during, the sessions of the Assembly,—the leaders of this party, from being, in 1832, in a very small minority, became in 1837, powerful enough to carry through in the Assembly a series of measures which had been previously concerted and determined on in the secret and sometimes nocturnal meetings of their Convention.

The result is before the world. A church, but a few years since peaceful, prosperous, and united, now violently rent asunder—suspicion, evil-speaking, and slander, taking the place of mutual confidence and fraternal affection—the holy bonds which once held together hundreds of thousands of fellow Christians united in a common faith, now rudely severed—these are the trophies of what has been termed, as if in mockery, the "Great Reform!"

It was in reference to these ominous movements of this newly organized and revolutionary party, that the Old School Professors at Princeton, but five months before the excision, held the following language: "That such a church should be rent asunder and split, no one can tell into how many fragments, is enough to make dispassionate men wonder and weep. Believing such separation to be wrong in principle, and fraught with calamities which no one can foresee or estimate, we should be recreant to every principle of *duty*, if we did not *say* so."—*(Princeton Repertory, Jan.* 1837.*)*

In the same article from which the above is extracted, these leading men of the (genuine) Old School, renew the expression of their "dissent from the Act and Testimony and its associated measures, as (manifestly) designed and adapted to divide the Church;" they reiterate their condemnation of the "extra-constitutional and avowedly revolutionary" measures, by which the reform leaders were aiming to effect the "disruption of our beloved church;" and they profess themselves constrained, under the strong "pressure of *conscience*," to declare, that, in their judgment, all these "extra-constitutional measures were not only unwise, but *wrong*, not in policy merely, but in *morals*."

Having thus the sanction of the highest Old School authority, we

surely do not expose ourselves to the charge of any party bias, when *we too* pronounce the whole series of preliminary "Reform" measures, "EXTRA-CONSTITUTIONAL AND AVOWEDLY REVOLUTIONARY; WRONG, not in policy merely, but in MORALS." But if such, in the judgment of the Princeton Professors, be the character of the *earlier* proceedings of the party—what language would correctly describe the unprecedented measures of 1837 and 1838? If, in the view of these gentlemen, the bare idea that "such a church should be rent asunder and split no one can tell into how many fragments," was "enough to make *dispassionate* men wonder and weep," we may claim not to be actuated by party feeling, when, in retrospection, we deplore and condemn what seemed to them, in prospect, a consummation so devoutly to be deprecated. And if they, believing the disruption of the Church to be "wrong in principle," considered that they should be "recreant to every principle of *duty* if they did not *say so*," may not we too claim to have acted under the "pressure (not of *party*, but) of *conscience*," when we have steadfastly refused to give our sanction to those measures which have made havoc of the Church?

If they, but five months before the excision, deemed the threatened dismemberment of the Church to be "fraught with calamities which no one could foresee or estimate,"—are we censurable because we cannot join in thanksgivings and JUBILEES, in view of the *actual event?* If the comparatively unexceptionable measures prior to 1837, seemed to them worthy of so severe condemnation, mainly because they were "designed and adapted to divide the Church," is it strange that in view, not merely of the *fact* of that division, but of the high-handed, unconstitutional, and unjust measures by which it has been brought about, we sternly disapprove this misnamed "*Reform?*"

Previous to the opening of the Assembly of 1837, and at intervals during its sessions, a convention of the Reform party sat with closed doors. In that convention, every effort was made to excite to the utmost the prejudices, and to play upon the feelings of its members. Hours were spent in that body, day after day, in delivering and listening to, speeches of the most inflammatory character; and hundreds and thousands of ministers and church-members were censured and vilified on no better evidence than that of hear-say testimony, and "Common Fame."

The result was, that four Synods, comprising about 500 ministers

and 60,000 church members, were condemned *en masse*, as "disorderly and heretical,"—not by the constituted tribunals of the Church—not as the result of any judicial investigation—not on the testimony of witnesses confronted with the accused—not after that opportunity for defence which natural justice, as well as all civil and ecclesiastical law, assigns to those against whom accusation is brought; but by an irresponsible tribunal, unknown to the Constitution—by the simple *votes* of men pronouncing sentence without any of those solemnities with which judicial decisions are invested both by the common law and the Constitution of the Church—without opportunity given to the accused to hear the charges, to confront the witnesses, or to offer explanation or defence of any kind—and on testimony so destitute of all claim to authenticity, and so palpably *ex parte* in its character, that a court of justice would not have admitted it in a case involving property to the amount of *forty shillings*. Of so little value, in the eyes of this Convention, were the ecclesiastical and civil rights of 500 ministers and 60,000 church members!

That a body of men, generally in the ordinary relations of life worthy of all respect, could be brought, by any power of party machinery or inflammatory rhetoric, so unscrupulously to trample upon the rights of their fellow-Christians, and to violate the Constitution which they were solemnly bound to obey, must appear to dispassionate men beyond measure strange. The fact can be but partially accounted for, even when we take into view the sinister influences so successfully brought to bear upon their minds, and the extraordinary efforts made by the leaders to create an excitement so intense that, under its impulse, good men might be hurried into the performance of acts, which, under other circumstances, their cooler judgments would have spontaneously rejected.

The measures resolved on in the Convention were executed in the Assembly. A majority in the latter body of only 27 out of 237 members, undertook by simple vote to cut off from the Church, without trial or hearing, 500 ministers and 600 churches, including 60,000 church-members.

It is this Excision which constitutes the prominent *Reform* measure, (so called) or as it is sometimes termed, the "*Basis*," of 1837.

Let us now compare this summary procedure with the Constitution of the Church.

It is a fundamental article of the Constitution, that no individual can be excinded without full opportunity previously given for trial and self-defence. This attempted excision therefore of hundreds of ministers, and thousands of members, without trial or hearing, was as flagrant a violation of the express provisions of the Constitution, as it manifestly was of the eternal principles of justice.

It is also a fundamental article of the Constitution, that "Before any overtures or regulations proposed by the Assembly to be established as constitutional rules, shall be obligatory on the Churches, it shall be necessary to transmit them to all the PRESBYTERIES, and to receive the returns of at least a majority of them, in writing, approving thereof." In accordance with this plain and decisive language of the Constitution, it has been universally admitted that the General Assembly cannot by its own authority, so much as change the time of theological study, without the previously obtained written approbation of at least a majority of the PRESBYTERIES: this subject, with others of still less importance, has been several times sent down to the *Presbyteries* for their decision. The reform party themselves are pledged to the principle that the plan of union of 1801, which was a mere temporary missionary arrangement for the frontiers, was unconstitutional, because, as they say, "these important standing rules have never been submitted to the Presbyteries."* That they should undertake to defend the excision of 500 ministers and 60,000 church members, without trial or hearing, as an act to which a bare majority in the Assembly of 1837 was fully competent, is indeed most wonderful. Nothing is more certain, than that the Excision, even though it had been justifiable in itself, would still have been an act of legislation expressly forbidden to the Assembly, and in no respect "obligatory on the churches." It was unconstitutional, null and void.

The leading Reform measure (so called,) of 1838, was the passage by a fractional Assembly of an "Ordinance," the most remarkable provision of which was, that "in case the majority of any Presbytery shall decline or fail to adhere to the Presbyterian Church on the basis of 1837 and 1838, for the reform, &c., then the *minority* shall be the *Presbytery*." The same course was marked out for every church and church session. Under this "ordinance," a *minority* of *three* ministers out of *thirty*, may claim to be the Presbytery; the same

* Minutes of the General Assembly of 1837, p. 421.

minority in a church of one hundred or five hundred members, may claim to be *the* church, and may take possession of the entire property! This is the "basis of 1838."

Thus did a body of men, claiming to act as the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, under a Constitution which positively prohibits the Assembly from attempting to establish a single constitutional rule, undertake, by their own authority, to *divide* the Church of which the Assembly was constituted the "bond of union;" and to divide it by an ordinance in palpable violation of the express provisions of our Form of Government, and of the most settled principles of social order. This Ordinance, even had it emanated from the constitutional source of legislative authority, would still have been unconstitutional, its principles being in palpable violation of the *fundamental* law—i. e., the Constitution. But it is in no sense a *law;* it has never been *enacted;* for only the *Presbyteries* can enact laws or rules which shall be "obligatory on the churches." It stands, therefore, on the same footing with any other production of its author; and would have been of just as much binding force, if promulgated on his own individual authority, as it is now. For if only the Presbyteries can make such an enactment "obligatory on the churches," it matters not whether it come forth under the sanction of an Assembly, a convention, or an individual. It is, on either supposition, equally and absolutely null and void.

As, while the Constitution of the Church remains in force, these excinding acts of 1837 and 1838 are manifestly without authority and void, it was necessary that the Constitution should be subverted, and a "*New Basis*" established in its place. This has been done. The "*Basis of* '37 *and* '38" is that upon which the party has founded itself; and hence the dividing line is now of necessity drawn between the adherents to this New Basis on the one hand, and those on the other hand, who remain on the *old basis* of the Constitution.

The attempt has sometimes been made to represent this "New Basis" as only *supplementary* to the Constitution, instead of being *subversive* of it. But if, while the Constitution prescribes certain qualifications of church membership, and positively prohibits excision without trial, the New Basis on the other hand makes additional qualifications indispensably requisite to good standing with the party, and expressly sanctions, and is absolutely founded upon, the prin-

ciple of summary and wholesale excision without trial, it is manifest that these new tests of membership are subversive of the constitutional requisitions, and that this New excinding Basis is not supplementary to, but a *substitute for*, the Old Basis of the Constitution.

The party measures of 1839 and 1840 have been principally directed to the "*carrying out of the Reform*," said to be "so *auspiciously* commenced," and to the completion of the new system or basis of Church Government which had been during the two preceding years established. That basis, however, is still fluctuating and uncertain. Measures have already been adopted and purposes disclosed, which even since the Assembly of 1838. the leading organs of the party have denounced and disavowed. One or two cases of this kind may be specified.

When the Reform Ordinance was first promulgated, it was declared by all the leading organs of the party, that *approval* was *not* involved in *adherence*. The Princeton Repertory, in an elaborate article on the subject, denied in the strongest and most direct terms, that the Ordinance required approval; and expressly defined the "basis of 1837 and 1838," as simply a phrase designating the Assembly which held its sessions in the 7th Church. But when this question was brought up for decision in the Reform Assemblies of 1839 and 1840, in connection with the doings of a minority of the Charleston Union Presbytery, which minority had claimed to act under the "positive and authoritative injunction of the Assembly" in demanding of the majority *approval* of the measures of 1837 as essential to membership, the Reform Assembly of 1840 deliberately confirmed the proceedings in the case. And now, to justify this excision, it is published to the world that approval, at least a "certain measure" of approval, is "*self-evidently*" requisite to adherence. And it is left to local policy and individual caprice, to adjust the measure of approval required.

Another instance. In the earlier stages of this revolution, it was strenuously and vehemently denied, that to patronize the ecclesiastical Boards of the party, was requisite to good standing in the New Basis Church. But now it is manifest, from numerous cases that might be cited, that patronage of these Boards is one of the tests of orthodoxy; and that he who should dare to prefer the A. B. C. F. M., or the other National Societies, to the Boards of the Party, would thereby bring his orthodoxy immediately into suspicion, and subject himself to the risk of being "purged away" at the pleasure of the party.

These and many similar instances which might be cited, show conclusively that the New Basis completely sets aside the requisitions and guarantees of the Constitution, and leaves the rights, both civil and ecclesiastical, of those adhering to it, entirely at the mercy of the precarious and ever-shifting policy of party leaders.

What, now, are the leading features of this novel system of Church Government? Let us compare them with the Constitution of the Church.

1. The Constitution provides, that not even the humblest private church member shall be cut off from the Church, without full opportunity given for trial and defence. The *Reform* establishes its very "basis" on the Excision, without process, or hearing, or trial, of 500 ministers and 600 churches, embracing 60,000 church members; and its great ordinance, as now interpreted by the acts of the party, provides for the excision, at pleasure, of every minister, elder, and church member, who may dare to form and express an opinion adverse to the will of the party. If such escape excision, it is not because they are protected by the Reformed Basis, but because local policy would thus be interfered with.

2. The Constitution spreads its protecting aegis over the *good name* of all the members of the church, and especially of its ministers. It provides that where a grave accusation is preferred against the doctrinal soundness or general reputation of a minister, the matter shall be investigated in the proper ecclesiastical court; and that the prosecutor, if he fail to make out his case, shall be censured as a "slanderer."

All these barriers which the Constitution of the Church erects around the character and reputation of its ministers, have been prostrated whenever their observance was likely to prove "tedious, inconvenient, or troublesome" to the dominant party. The first six chapters of the Book of Discipline have generally been to them a dead letter.

3. The Constitution leaves the effective power of the Church in the hands of the Presbyteries; and strictly prohibits the Assembly from attempting to establish by its own authority a single "Constitutional rule." The Reformed system makes a most radical change in the relation of the Assembly to the Presbyteries; it places the pyramid upon its apex; it concentrates the effective power of the entire Church

in the Assembly; and leaves the constitutional rights and even the very existence of the Presbyteries, at the mercy of a bare majority in that body; a majority, secured, it may be, by party machinery under the dictation of a few leaders, and previously committed to their policy by means of party conventions.

4. The Constitution does not make any provision for, and evidently does not contemplate the existence of, any such system of Ecclesiastical Boards as that which is now identified with the New Basis policy. Such a concentration of the charitable revenues of the Church in the hands of a few leading partizans in and around Philadelphia, is as inconsistent with the Constitution, as it is with the purity and peace of the Church. Of late we have the authority of certain prominent, but now (it would seem) disaffected, members of the Reform party, for pronouncing the whole system "*unpresbyterian, unscriptural, and dangerous.*"

5. Another distinctive feature of the new system, is its systematic and wholesale violation of the *rights of property* of those members of the Church, who prefer the Constitution to the New Basis. The Union Theological Seminary in Virginia, the Theological Seminary at Columbia, S. C., the Oglethorpe University in Georgia—institutions, each of which was founded and chiefly sustained by the liberal donations of Constitutional Presbyterians, are now wholly within the grasp of the New Basis party. We forbear to enter into the painful details of the unjustifiable and discreditable transactions, by which, in these and similar instances, the funds of Constitutional Presbyterians have been unscrupulously wrested from them. Details, however, are needless to illustrate the policy, in this respect, of a party whose "Ordinance" assumes to place the property of every Presbytery and Church in the hands of a *minority*, no matter how small, whenever the majority reject the New Basis; and at the same time exhorts its minorities to avail themselves of any "Providential advantages" which may tend to secure to them the funds of the whole.

6. But far worse than any influence from the perversion of funds, is that tendency which this system has already developed, to *corrupt the very fountains of free and independent thought.* Theological Seminaries, religious newspapers, candidates for the ministry, and especially, the beneficiaries of the ecclesiastical boards, must all be

either the willing instruments, or the destined victims, of this ever-present, overshadowing, ecclesiastical despotism.

The constitution leaves to every member of the Church the natural right to form and express an opinion as to the measures of the Assembly. The Reformed system, arrogating to the acts of fallible men that which only belongs to the Divinity, demands that its most violent and unprecedented measures should be *approved*, or at least silently acquiesced in, on penalty of expulsion from its ranks. Were the measures of '37 so pre-eminently identical with the eternal principles of moral rectitude, that approval of *them* should be the test and the standard of pure and undefiled religion in a Christian Church—with a party self-styled *Reformed?*

7. The Constitution declares, that "no church judicatory ought to pretend to make laws to bind the conscience in virtue of their own authority; and that all their decisions should be founded on the revealed will of God." How opposite to this is that party policy which makes a cordial concurrence with its acts, involving a "certain measure of approval" of them, essential to good standing in the Church!

8. The Constitution declares that, "Since ecclesiastical discipline must be purely moral or spiritual in its object, and not attended with any civil effects, it can derive no force whatever, but from its own justice, the approbation of an impartial public, and the countenance and blessing of the great Head of the Church universal." This single sentence of the Constitution contains a fourfold condemnation of the Reform.

9. The Constitution recognises "Common Fame," as a witness whose testimony may be sufficient to authorise *trial*, but not, of itself, conviction or condemnation. The Reform leaders have appealed to the existence of a Common Fame (too often of their own creation,) as the ground of doing that which the Constitution plainly forbids. Witness the course of procedure in the Convention and Assembly of 1837.

10. The Constitution, in accordance with the principles of Protestantism and the precepts of the Word of God, forbids "to do evil that good may come," or to make a professedly good end the pretext by which to sanction unworthy means. But the Reform is sustained by thousands who do not deny that the measures of '37 were unjustifiable and wrong; and it has been the uniform policy of the leaders to induce

the officers and members of the Church to sustain and sanction, under the pretext of maintaining sound doctrine, measures which they did not and could not approve.

11. The Constitution, in accordance with the primary and essential characteristic of Presbyterianism, establishes the principle of *ministerial parity.* On the contrary, the leading principle of the New Basis policy has been, to subject the pastors of the churches to the will of party leaders, many of whom, not being themselves engaged in the appropriate duties of the gospel ministry, are therefore least fitted and least authorised to rule the Church. These individuals have been the most efficient agents in effecting the disruption of the Church, whilst an overwhelming majority of its pastors, elders and members, have had no other alternative but that of silent acquiescence in the doings of a party, or total deprivation of their ecclesiastical rights. To many, the progress of this revolution has been literally a "*reign of terror;*" they have not ventured to express, if indeed to form, an opinion of their own, in relation to measures with which they have been required cordially to concur, on penalty of excision.

12. The Constitution recognizes and protects the *rights of minorities.* The new system, on the other hand, is founded on the principle that minorities "*must be crushed*"; it even institutes process against those who, though in the most courteous and Christian manner, defend the Constitution; it requires not merely submission to, but silent *acquiescence* in, acts conscientiously believed to be unconstitutional and unjust; and it systematically holds out the strongest temptations to induce the officers of the Church dishonorably to sacrifice their principles in order to keep in with the majority. Where would many ministers and elders be found, who are now counted as adherents of the New Basis—if, in their immediate vicinity, the majority inclined to the other side?

13. Finally, the Constitution, in accordance with the Word of God, recognizes but one course of ecclesiastical policy as consistent with Christian character—viz., an *open, honorable, and ingenuous* policy. Has this Reform been conducted on *Protestant and Christian* principles? Look at the Secret Circulars, the Conventions sitting with closed doors,* and the entire system of punishing men for their honest opinions. Mark how studiously the conductors of the New

* It is possible that this remark applies only to the nocturnal meetings of 1837.

Basis prints have sought to obscure the question at issue. That question is, and has ever been, at the South, Were the excinding measures morally right? But these editors have sought to blind the eyes of their readers by introducing the question of *doctrine*—of *Old* and *New* Divinity; they have exhausted the vocabulary of hard names, such as "*heretic*," "*Pelagian*," &c., with a view to render their opponents odious; and some have even endeavored insidiously to associate the friends of the Constitution at the South with the reckless and fanatical fury of Abolitionism. These individuals know perfectly well, and the testimony of some of them is on record, that it is *not* a question of *doctrine* which has divided the Southern Presbyterian Church, and that its peace and harmony were uninterrupted, till, by party organization, and by the influence of these very prints, this foreign controversy was forced upon them. They are also well aware, that the Southern Constitutionalists are united in favoring such an organization of the Church as shall effectually avoid the danger of fanatical agitation in an Assembly invested with ecclesiastical power; while, in contrast, the Southern adherents of the New Basis are, on the question of Southern institutions, permanently in the minority in an Assembly in which they have assisted to consolidate the legislative and judicial power of the entire Church. To permit the Southern churches to become acquainted with the true merits of the case would be destructive of the interests of the new system; and hence we find it the settled policy of the leaders (as part and parcel of the "carrying out of the Reform") to keep in the back ground the true merits of the question; to avail themselves to the utmost, of the potent efficacy (with the uninformed) of opprobrious epithets; and to represent Constitutionalism to be every thing that it is not. By Constitutionalists, the system of the opposing party is designated as the "Reform" and the "New Basis"—terms introduced and made familiar by the party itself, as their watch-word and their test; the policy of the Reform prints on the other hand, is, first to endeavor to render the term "*New School*" a synonyme for every thing odious in heresy, disorder, and fanaticism,—and then to apply this epithet indiscriminately to all who oppose the excinding measures—even to those whom they well know to be, in principle, ardently attached to the doctrines of our standards, and, in policy, favorable to a Southern Organization. Such a course of procedure is as flagrant

a violation of the Constitution of our church, as it is of the principles of Protestantism, and the precepts of Christianity.

Such are some of the points of contrast between the (so called) *Reform*, and the Constitution of the Church.

In conclusion, let it be specially noted, that in this report we have directed attention to the *measures* of the (so called) *Reform*, and to the *principles* involved. It is with these *measures* and *principles* only that we have to do. We desire to put the most charitable construction upon the course of those, who, from whatever motives, have been led to succumb to, or coincide with, the revolution now in progress. Whilst we cannot doubt that a great responsibility rests with the authors of this schism, and with those unscrupulous partizans by whose influence, either as leaders or as instruments, the car of revolution is still rolled onward over the disjointed fragments of our once prosperous and united Church—we still firmly believe, that nine-tenths of our (so called) Reform brethren would have been guiltless of any co-operation in the excinding measures, had these been, as the Constitution prescribes, submitted beforehand to the PRESBYTERIES.

REPORT

ON THE RELATIONS OF THE BODIES REPRESENTED IN THE CONVENTION.

The Committee, to whom was referred the consideration of the present and prospective relations of those represented in this Convention, respectfully report:

That, viewing the peculiar circumstances in which they are placed; the various predilections that have been expressed; the many difficulties attending a new and separate organization; and the comparatively few advantages to be anticipated from a change of relations: And whereas, some connected with the Constitutional Assembly, which has recently modified its constitution, in accordance with their views and wishes, feel honorably bound to sustain the integrity of their present ecclesiastical relation: And whereas, some have taken the incipient measures to form a connexion with that body as newly organized: And whereas, some sustain no ecclesiastical relations except those of Presbytery; while others claim to belong to the Presbyterian Church

in the United States of America; though they deem it inexpedient, for the present, to take any part in their proceedings: And whereas, these distinct relations of the several Presbyteries need not prevent a bond of union in the form of an annual Convention; Therefore,

Resolved, 1st, That this Convention will, and hereby do, cordially unite in an annual SOUTHERN AND SOUTH WESTERN CONVENTION; and recommend that all who sympathize with them, should, by delegation or otherwise, unite in the same.

Resolved, 2ndly, That, while we do not interfere with the present or prospective ecclesiastical relations of individuals and Presbyteries, this bond of union, based on common feelings of opposition to the reform measures, and a mutual regard to the peculiar interests of the South; a warm attachment to the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America; its doctrines, order and discipline; and the strongest sympathy and Christian affection,—shall be held sacred and kept inviolate; until, in the providence of God, the obstacles now in the way of permanent ecclesiastical relations on the part of some of the bodies represented in this Convention, shall be removed.

Resolved, 3rdly, That we hold ourselves bound by the most solemn obligations, to use all just and honorable means to promote the interests contemplated in this mutual bond of union.

APPENDIX.

*CASE OF THE CHARLESTON UNION PRESBYTERY.**

The Charleston Union Presbytery sent two Commissioners to the General Assembly of 1838. These Commissioners, though disapproving the measures of 1837, were members of the Assembly of 1838 which held its sessions in the 7th church. They thus defined their position to be adherence without approval. The Presbytery, at its first sessions after the dissolution of the Assembly, unanimously *approved* the course of its Commissioners, thus defining *its* position to be also that of adherence without approval. Such was its position, when, in consequence of certain proceedings of a *minority* of the Presbytery, a question, involving the ecclesiastical and civil rights of this body, was brought before the Synod of South Carolina and Georgia, for their decision. The circumstances were as follows:

Presbytery having met according to adjournment on the evening of Dec. 4th, 1838,—the roll having been called, and the business next in order being the election of a moderator,—a member (Mr. Smyth) read and offered to Presbytery a paper, containing a series of Resolutions, of which the most important was, that "*the roll be now called, and each member, without discussion, do declare whether he can* APPROVE OF THE REFORM MEASURES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF 1837, *and whether he can adhere to the General Assembly of* 1838, *which sat in Philadelphia in May last, in the 7th Presbyterian Church, &c., and that those who answer in the* affirmative, *&c., do constitute the Presbytery of Charleston Union, &c.*,"——leaving those who might answer in the *negative* to withdraw.

It will be seen that this resolution was so contrived, that in case a majority of those happening to be present at the unusual juncture when it was presented, had voted for it—its operation would have been to cut off from the Presbytery and the Church, "*without discussion*," all, (whether *adhering* or not) who might not be able to "APPROVE *the measures* of 1837!"

The moderator *pro. tem.* decided the resolutions to be *out of order*, the business in order being the election of a moderator. His decision was appealed from, but the appeal was lost. Whereupon Mr. Smyth proclaimed the *minority* to be the Charleston Union Presbytery, Mr. Gildersleeve, having previously stationed himself within a few feet of the door, with great celerity gathered up the papers belonging to Presbytery, and—the Presbytery meanwhile proceeding with its usual business—the minority withdrew.

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* As the case of the Charleston Union Presbytery is one of the most remarkable that has occurred, the Committee of Publication consider that a concise statement of it in this connection, will not be deemed out of place.

The question, whether the *majority* that *remained*, or the *minority* that *withdrew*, as above described, on the 4th of December, was the *true* Charleston Union Presbytery, came up before the Synod of South Carolina and Georgia, at its sessions held in Augusta, November, 1839. That body deliberately *resolved* that the *minority* "*be considered as the* TRUE CHARLESTON UNION PRESBYTERY—*that the remaining members of the Charleston Union Presbytery, as constituted at the last meeting of Synod, are* NOT *considered as the Presbytery.*"

The records of the Synod came under the review of the (so called) Reformed Assembly of 1840. The members of that body were furnished with a printed statement of the facts in the case, sustained by documentary evidence, and signed by two members of the majority of Charleston Union Presbytery. With these facilities for ascertaining the truth, that Assembly deliberately "*approved*" *the doings of Synod.*

Such is a brief outline of the case of the Charleston Union Presbytery. Under what influences the Synod was led to adopt this course, the following facts will partially explain.

1. The minority that withdrew from Presbytery on the night of Dec. 4th, "took steps," the very next morning, to *ordain* one of the Presbytery's licentiates. Said licentiate being absent, a day was appointed for his examination. When the day arrived, he having been "very ill," was unable to attend at the place appointed; whereupon Messrs. Gildersleeve and Smyth—accompanied by an individual who for a long course of years had wholly ceased from the duties of the ministry, as well as from attending Presbytery—*went to his house*, and examined him while "reclining (a part of the time at least,) on a sofa." Shortly after, the same individuals (no other members of Presbytery being present,) went through the form of *ordaining* this licentiate. By this device they placed the Synod under the necessity of either recognizing *them as the C. U. Presbytery*, or of pronouncing the attempted ordination INVALID, and the subject of it still a licentiate. The hardship and severity of this last measure were pathetically set forth by Mr. Smyth in his plea before the Synod, and, the licentiate being present, the argument evidently had its effect. Thus did the seceders take advantage of *their own wrong.*

2. The minority undertook to *send delegates, as if from the Charleston Union Presbytery, to the Assembly of* 1839.—Now it had been ordained by the preceding Assembly (1838) that, in *this* Assembly (1839) the delegates from *minorities* of Presbyteries in which a division had taken place under the operation of the Reform Ordinance, should not be admitted to seats "*until the Assembly had first been formed, and had received a satisfactory report*" as to the facts in the case. This positive and plain requisition, the delegates from the seceding minority of C. U. Presbytery EVADED. Instead of waiting till "the Assembly was first formed," and then submitting their case to the investigation of the *Committee of Elections*, appointed for that purpose, (which was done by all the other delegates from *minorities*, 17 in number) they sat in that Assembly, just as if delegated by the *entire* Charleston Union Presbytery—just as if there had been no division in it under the (pretended) authority of the Reform Ordinance!

In consequence of this procedure, no investigation of the case was made by that Assembly, (1839) and thus the ordeal, to which the true Charleston Union Presbytery was looking, as decisive of the question—whether the Reform Ordinance had required "APPROVAL *of the measures of* '37," on penalty of EXCISION—was *evaded.*

This procedure was the more remarkable, inasmuch as Messrs. G. & S. had both published to the world, that in their proceedings of Dec. 4th, they had been "only obeying, as in duty bound, the orders of the Supreme Judicatory"—had been "*constrained* by the POSITIVE and AUTHORITATIVE INJUNCTIONS of the Assembly," to the discharge of—"a painful duty."!!!!! Why, then, were they afraid to have even their own party look into the matter? Why did they evade that "positive and authoritative injunction," which required an investigation of their doings by the Assembly of '39?

Before Synod, Mr. S. urged that the question, which was the true Charleston Union Presbytery, had been set at rest forever *by the Assembly's having recognized the minority as the Presbytery!* This argument had great weight with the Synod; as is evinced by their designating (in their Resolution) the minority, not as the body that withdrew on the night of Dec. 4th, but as "*the body which was represented in the last Assembly.*" A statement of the facts would have shown conclusively that the seceders of Dec. 4th had never been recognized as the Charleston Union Presbytery by the Assembly, their delegates having crept into that body illegally, by an evasion of its rules; but this topic, in common with many others, was suppressed on the floor of Synod by the harassing interruptions, references to the lateness of the hour, &c., by which the only speaker in defence of the rights of the Presbytery, was repeatedly assailed.

It may be asked, who were these delegates—and by whom were they sent? The delegates were Mr. Smyth and an elder who, having seceded from the Johns' Island Church, came (self-delegated, for the secession from said Church counted but *one* other male member,*) to these seceders from Presbytery, who affected to receive this little secession *under their care* as "the Johns' Island Church," and sent this elder from *no* "regularly organized Church," (as their own records afterwards admit) to the Assembly! Such were the delegates. The clerical (!) voters who undertook to send them as the Commissioners of the Charleston Union Presbytery—a body consisting (exclusive of the seceders and without counting the Foreign Missionaries) of eleven *bona fide* members, of whom eight were Pastors of Churches, and all engaged in the duties of the ministry—were—one licentiate, two school-masters, and one pastor!†

3. The decision of Synod was doubtless influenced most of all by the prejudices and hostile feelings, which had been beforehand systematically played upon by the authors of the schism. Of these, one, by means of his paper, had for more than a year circulated through the Synod whatever statements were most fitted to misrepresent and injure the Presbytery; and the speeches of the other, both on the floor of Synod and out of doors, were, as regards reckless asser-

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* The seceders have since *entered suit* for the funds of the Johns' Island Church.

† The "Presbytery of Charleston" (so called.)—made up by Synod by adding the seceders from C. U. Presbytery to the ministers and churches of Richland District—has on its roll 14 ministers; only ONE of them is a PASTOR! Of the rest we believe *all* are without pastoral charge; not one even so much as a Stated Supply!

The Constitution contemplates Pastors and Elders as the constituent elements of a Presbytery. Did the Plan of Union ever sanction so great an anomaly as a Presbytery with one Pastor and 13 without charge? So much for Reform!

Of the 5 "Churches" claimed by them, (one being the little secession from Johns' Island Church, and another, unable to support a Minister,) *four* are without pastors, and, it is understood, without even a Stated Supply!

tion and inflammatory appeal to party feeling, of a character that defies description. That these individuals should, in 1838, demand of the majority of Presbytery, on penalty of excision, "APPROVAL of the measures of '37,"—measures as to which, but one year before, they had themselves placed on the records of Presbytery, their "*Nota Bene*" that "they did not wish to pledge themselves to the entire expediency of the whole acts of the Assembly"—was sufficiently strange; but that in '38, they should publish over their own signatures that the majority of Presbytery differed from them "ESSENTIALLY as to DOCTRINE"—when, but the year before, (Observer, Aug. 5, 1837,) Mr. G. had said, (and, in the Synod of '37, Mr. Smyth used almost the identical words) "There is NO discrepancy in this Presbytery on questions of doctrine"—may well excite surprise where these individuals are personally unknown.*

The Synod evidently decided the question on party grounds. Its very record betrays the consciousness of wrong. It presents a false issue—it declares the majority cut off, not for not approving, but for not adhering. But it is undeniable, that the Presbytery was in full connection with the Assembly and Synod at the time when the seceders withdrew, in consequence of their resolution (making approval essential to membership) being declared out of order; and if it could even be proved (which it never can be) that *after* that time, Presbytery "declined or failed to adhere," that would not make the seceders of Dec. 4th, the Presbytery. But when Synod say that the majority of the Presbytery are out of the Church, "because they have not, in Presbytery, expressed adherence," they plunge into the Hibernian absurdity of declaring, that, whereas the Presbytery did not "express adherence" on Dec. 5th, therefore it ceased to exist on Dec. 4th! In what school is that logic learned, which makes it out that a man *killed himself yesterday* by an *act which he performed to-day?* The question is, *Which was the true Charleston Union Presbytery on the evening*

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* More recently the same individual who said in 1837, after years of intimate knowledge of almost every individual member, "There is no discrepancy, &c.," has published the Charleston Union Presbytery to the world *eleven times* (and endorsed the publication) as "*the Pelagians* of Charleston," "*Pelagians*" and not "*Christians*," "those who *crucify Christ*, by blaspheming his Gospel," "who, by the *great grace of God*, are now separated from the communion of the Church," &c. &c.

This, however, should not create wonder; for the same individual, in August, 1834, after largely exhibiting, by quotations from their own writings, the views of the leaders of the New School, particularly DR. BEMAN and MR. BARNES, says, "If there be *heresy* in them, we are *not sufficiently sagacious to discern it!!!*" But within a few months he has referred to the *very same writings* of Dr. Beman, in which he said he could *discern no heresy*,—to prove that Dr. B. teaches "*another Gospel!!!*"

Nor should even this excite surprise, for it is the same individual who, when, in 1834, a Reform paper was got up to counteract his New Schoolism, thus taunted its Editor:

"He comes in a *Reformer*. He sounds an alarm. He proclaims to the churches that some terrible disaster awaits them—Arminianism, and Pelagianism, and New Schoolism, and a host of other isms, are countenanced.

Our Southern Churches were never in a more happy and prosperous state than when this *Reformer* arose. There was then unity, &c. The Ministry regarded each other as brethren entitled to their confidence and love, &c. But we very much fear that a *terrible disaster* is at hand. We hope not, and we *pray* that *God, in his mercy*, may avert it."

But now he is piously thankful and *jubilant*, that, "by the *great grace of God*," in connection with his own incessant ringing of the changes on "*Pelagianism*," "*New Schoolism*," &c., this "*terrible disaster*" has taken place!!!

of December 4th? The *majority* that *remained*, or the *minority* that *withdrew?* Synod says, the minority; and then says that the majority are out, "because they have not in Presbytery, expressed adherence!!" But from the meeting of the Assembly till after the minority withdrew on the night of Dec. 4th, the Presbytery had not been organized for business; in that interval, therefore, it was impossible that the majority, "in Presbytery," could have expressed adherence to that Assembly; and, according to Synod, when the minority withdrew, the majority ceased to be the Presbytery. Therefore the majority are out, according to Synod, for not doing what it was impossible, in the nature of things, that they should do—for not doing a specific act, "in Presbytery," when, according to Synod, they had ceased to be the Presbytery before they were organized for action!

This absurd and deceptive resolution, concocted by Alonzo Church, D. D., was adopted, *after midnight*, by the following vote:

Ayes.—Ministers: Ketchum, W. H. Davis, Martin, Gibert, Church, S. S. Davis, Talmage, Bowman, Safford, Brearly, Howe, English, Reid, Axson, Jones, McQueen, Petrie, Donnelly, Baird, Winn, Davies, Douglas, Wilson, Cassels, Dickson, Chamberlain, Patterson, Montgomery. Elders: Leslie, Harris, Eve, Mitchell, Cunningham, Bryan, Law, Wilson, Aiken, Poag—38.

Nays.—Ministers: Howard, Carter, Goulding, Cunningham, Templeton, Erwin—6.

It is manifest that fifty such resolutions can never alter a *fact*—can never affect the identity of the Charleston Union Presbytery. It has had the effect, however, to defraud the Presbytery of its share in the Theological Seminary, (in which it has founded and partially endowed a Professorship) to whose funds it has contributed probably not far from $20,000.

This procedure of Synod has been pronounced a "*monstrosity*" by one of its members, still a "cordial adherent" of the Reform, and eschewing all sympathy with the C. U. Presbytery. It was, nevertheless, *approved* by the Reformed Assembly of 1840; although that body possessed the requisite facilities for investigating the affair, and the constitutional power to rectify the wrong.

This Resolution of Synod is, in its nature, a *two-fold mis-statement of fact;* in its operation, designed to wrest from the Presbytery its rights, both civil and ecclesiastical; and this for no other crime than that of being in the minority of Synod, in their views as to the constitutionality and justice of the measures, styled "reform." That any good man, acquainted with the facts, should remain contented and acquiescent in connection with a body on whose records such a resolution is still unrescinded,—is indeed strange. When viewed dispassionately in future years, the whole transaction will doubtless be unhesitatingly condemned, even by those who now seek to palliate or justify it. Meanwhile, the Charleston Union Presbytery have the conscious satisfaction of feeling that it is better to be the *injured*, than the *injurer;* and will still indulge the hope that, at no distant day, Truth and Justice may resume that place in the counsels of their (so called) "reformed" brethren, which has been too long usurped by prejudice and party feeling.

CONSTITUTIONAL PRESBYTERIES OF THE SOUTH AND SOUTH-WEST.

I.—WINCHESTER PRESBYTERY, VIRGINIA.

Ministers.	*Post Offices.*
William Hill, D. D.	*Winchester, Va.*
John J. Royal,	*Richardsville,* "
J. T. Hargrave,	*Shepherdstown,* "
Silas Billings,	*Woodstock, Shenandoah co.* "
Andrew H. H. Boyd,	*Harrisonburg,* "
Moses Hoge Hunter,	*Winchester,* "
A. W. Kilpatrick,	*Clarksville, Tennessee.*

II.—DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA PRESBYTERY.

Ministers.	*Post Offices.*
John Mines,	*Rockville, Md.*
John C. Smith, (Stated Clerk,)	*Washington City.*
W. McLain,	" "
J. N. Danforth,	*Alexandria.*
George J. Wood,	*Washington City.*
I. L. Skinner,	— —
Thos. L. Hamner,	*Sykesville, Md.*
Charles Rich,	*Washington City.*

Licentiate.	*Candidate.*
R. R. Gurley.	Mr. Shepherd.

III.—HANOVER PRESBYTERY, VIRGINIA.

Ministers.	*Post Offices.*
J. H. C. Leach,	*Farmville, Va.*
J. Kirkpatrick,	*Longhorne's, Cumberland Co.* "
Henry Smith,	*Hanover,* "
A. D. Pollock,	*Richmond,* "
Alexander Meeane,	" "
A. J. Leavenworth,	*Petersburg,* "
Elisha Ballantine,	*Roanoke Bridge,* "
J. D. Mitchell,	*Liberty, Bedford Co.* "
Vinal Smith,	" " "
L. Smith,	*Drummondtown, Accomac Co.* "
James Stratton,	*Portsmouth,* "
S. Armistead,	*Rough Creek, Charlotte Co.* "

Licentiate.	*Candidates.*
J. McDearmon.	R. J. Gaines., W. H. Beach.

IV.—NEW RIVER PRESBYTERY, VIRGINIA.

Ministers.	*Post Offices.*
Stephen Taylor,	*Abingdon, Va.*
David F. Palmer,	*Smythe Co.* "
Robert Glenn,	*Christiansburg,* "
George Painter,	*Wythe Co.* "
James King,	*Washington Co.* "

V.—CHARLESTON UNION PRESBYTERY, S. C.

Ministers.	*Post Offices.*
B. M. Palmer, D. D.	*Charleston, S. C.*
R. Post, D. D.	" "
Wm. States Lee,	" "
Elipha White,	" "
Z. Rogers,	" "
I. S. K. Legare,	*Orangeburgh,* "
W. B. Yates,	*Charleston,* "
W. C. Dana,	" "
T. Magruder,	" "
T. H. Legare,	" "

J. L. Merrick, Dyer Ball. } *Foreign Missionaries.*

Licentiates.—James Adger, Jr., George Sheldon.

VI.—ETOWAH PRESBYTERY, GEORGIA.

Ministers.	*Post Offices.*
Hampden C. Carter,	*Marietta, Cobb co. Ga.*
Theodore M. Dwight,	*Waynesboro,' Burke co.* "
C. W. Howard,	*Cassville, Cass co.* "
James H. George.	" " " "

Licentiate.—C. W. Bryan.

VII., VIII., IX.—PRESBYTERIES OF ————, PROVIDENCE, AND GREEN RIVER, KENTUCKY.*

Ministers.	*Post Offices.*
Thomes Cleland, D. D.,	*Harrodsburg, Ky.*
Joseph C. Stiles,	*Versailles,* "
A. W. Campbell,	" "
S. Y. Garrison,	*Mason Co.,* "
—— Kennedy,	
—— Phillips,	
John Black,	
H. Woods,	
A. C. Dickerson,	*Bowling Green,* "

* These three newly constituted Presbyteries are placed together, as the Committee of Publication are in doubt under which of the three some of the names above given should be enrolled; also, as to the name of one of the Presbyteries.

X.—UNION PRESBYTERY, TENNESSEE.

Ministers.	*Post Offices.*
Isaac Anderson, D. D.	*Maryville, Tenn.*
Fielding Pope, (Stated Clerk)	" "
Alexander M'Ghee,	" "
John McCampbell, D. D.	*Dandridge,* "
J. H. Gass,	" "
Nathaniel Hood,	*Russelville,* "
Wm. Harrison,	*Newmarket,* "
W. Keith,	*Knoxville,* "
W. Minis,	*Sneddyville,* "
George A. Mathes,	*Asheville, N. C.*
Wm. A. McCampbell,	*Knoxville, Tenn.*
Robert H. Snoddy,	" "
—— Mack,	" "
—— Townsend,	" "
Wm. Graves,	" "
Joseph McKee,	*Wilkesborough, N. C.*
Albert G. Taylor,	*Cleaveland, Tenn.*
R. Caldwell,	—— "
John Dyke,	*Eunitia,* "
Aaron Grigsby,	" "
John S. Craig,	*Maryville,* "
L. R. Morrison.	*Athens,* "

XI.—HOLSTON PRESBYTERY, TENNESSEE.

Ministers.	*Post Offices.*
Chas. Coffin, D. D.	*Greenville, Tenn.*
John D. Wilson,	*Gustavus, Greene Co.* "
F. A. McCorkle,	*Greeneville,* "
Phillips Wood,	*Blountsville,* "
D. Rogan,	" "
Frederick A. Ross,	*Kingsport,* "
John W. Cunningham,	*Jonesboro',* "
James Maclin,	*Rogersville,* "
—— Gregg,	*Greeneville,* "
George Dunham,	—— "
—— Carson.	—— "

XII.—SHILOH PRESBYTERY, TENNESSEE.

Ministers.	*Post Offices.*
Wm. Eagleton, (S. C.)	*Murfreesboro', Tenn.*
J. Alexander,	*Milton, Wilson Co.* "
Bedford Ryland,	*Wilson Co.* "
A. Bradshaw,	*Mt. Reserve, Bedford Co.* "
John L. Sloan.	—— "

XIII.—PRESBYTERY OF WEST TENNESSEE.

Ministers.	*Post Offices.*
Thos. J. Hall,	*Farmington, Marshall County, Tenn.*
Robert Hardin, D. D.	*Spring Hill, Maury Co.* "
Joseph Sherman,	*Columbia,* "
Ewd. M'Millan, (S. C.)	*Cornerville, Giles Co.* "
John C. Ewing,	" " " "
Hugh K. Shields,	*Savannah, Hardin Co.* "
A. H. Dashiell,	*Franklin, Williamson Co.* "

XIV.—PRESBYTERY OF NORTH ALABAMA.

Ministers.	*Post Offices.*
John Allan, D. D.	*Huntsville, Ala.*
M. M. Marshall,	*Fayetteville, Lincoln County,* "
— M'Ewen,	" " "
H. Herrick,	*Somerville,* "
Wm. Potter,	*Huntsville,* "
John Huss,	——— "
Wm. Chamberlain,	——— "

XV.—CLINTON PRESBYTERY, MISSISSIPPI.

Ministers.	*Post Offices.*
Alexander Newton, (S. C.)	*Middleton, Mississippi.*
Wm. E. Holley,	*Carrollton,* "
Alexander Campbell,	*Sharon,* "
Duncan A. Campbell,	*Wahalak,* "
George Moore,	*Raymond,* "
L. N. Donnel,	*Aberdeen,* "
——— Morison,	*Lexington,* "
Jesse Stratton,	*Pinola,* "
Robert McLain.	*Grenada.* "

N. B. The above Catalogue is necessarily incomplete. The Stated Clerk of one Synod reports 46 ministers, where we have been able to ascertain the names, Post Offices, &c., of but 33. The whole number of Ministers already enrolled with Constitutional Presbyteries, is probably about 135. The number of Churches in connection is at least equal to that of the ministers. The number of Elders is probably about 500. Number of Licentiates and Candidates, unknown—not being generally included in the reports from the Presbyteries. It is to be hoped, that in the next Convention, appointed to be held at Cassville, Ga., on the 2nd Thursday of November next, all the Presbyteries will be fully represented, and the returns from each be accurately furnished by the Stated Clerks.